668 of Yü-tsi 80 per cent of the peasants were members
423 of the Peasant Association.[56]
665

665 The militia served as another instrument
423 of terror at the disposal of the Party. It is an
701 organization of poor peasants and farm laborers (67 per cent) and of youth (aged 18-30) and is strongly class-conscious.

At the end of the land reform in North China,[57] the militia's strength was placed at 2,371,900. In Shansi Province alone, it was 373,250 in November 1950. Needless to say, the militia in this region had participated in guerrilla warfare against the Japanese and later assisted the Communists to defeat the Nationalists. They were well-organized and had gone through several consolidations and readjustments. In addition to the normal duties assigned to the militia, such as guarding granaries, bridges and transportation centers and escorting food transportation, the militia was also expected to assist in coastal defense. In most cases, they were organized into teams, such as highway patrol groups, coastal defense squads, and village joint-defense teams. In the Paoting administrative district, 665 such village teams were organized among the 4,715 villages.[58]

665 2. Election of Ts'un (village) Peoples' Repre-
623 sentative Conference and Political Consolidation in the "old liberated" areas. The election of

56. Ibid., April 24, 1950, p. 2.
57 Ibid., Oct. 25, 1950, p. 1.
58 Hopei Daily, August 1, p. 3.

665 ts'un People's representative conferences in the
623 "old liberated" areas was the Communist attempt to consolidate rural political forces. It was an effort to strengthen the Communist hold and was taken immediately after the large scale Party training and overhauling launched in 1950. To strengthen the ts'un government, two measures were taken: one was the emphases of "key" village work,[59] and the other, the election of village People's representative conferences and village governments. While the "key" village plan was to create model villages where administrative experience might be gained, village elections were intended to overhaul old political set-ups and were carried out in all places within "old liberated" areas. As of March 1950 in Ting hsien, Hopei, 400 villages had completed village elections;[60] in the province as a whole,[61] 60 per cent of the villages had elected new village governments in November 1950.

The directives and plans calling for village elections were so elaborate that the concentrated efforts of all organizations was required.[62] The procedures followed in these elections were followed in the 1951 elections in the "newly liberated" areas and in the nationwide election of 1953-54. For this reason, the discussion of the 1950 election will be taken up in a later section.

665 3. Consolidation Period (August 1951-53).
634 The convening of the First Conference of County

59. People's Daily, Jan.28,1950,p. 3.
60. Ibid., March 26, 1950, p. 3.
61. Report of Yang Shiu-feng, Chairman of Hopei Province, Hopei Daily, Nov.25,1950,p.2.
62. People's Daily, Jan. 28, 1950, p. 3.

665 repeated the 1950 experience. Election districts
634 were allocated largely according to the distribution of the mutual aid teams, but elections were held with an average participation of from 70 to 80 per cent of all the voters. The elected ts'un People's representative conference was comprised mainly of poor peasants.[63] A statistical report on the composition of 776 ts'un Peoples' representative conferences showed that poor peasants constituted 56 per cent, while middle peasants took 35 per cent. The remaining 9 per cent went to farm laborers (5 per cent) and to the handicraft workers (4 per cent).

• 623 The ts'un government was elected from the ts'un People's representative conference. It was to include commissions on civil affairs, finance and food, agricultural production, culture and education, sanitation, public security, militia, and other functions.

474 In the organization of mutual aid teams
665 among the peasants, high achievements were repeated in most provinces within the region. In Shansi, the organized peasants amounted to 55 per cent of the total peasant families. Hopei was the second largest with 49 per cent.[64] The other three provinces were poorly organized with 40 per cent for Pingyuan, 30 per cent for Chahar and 10 per cent for Suiyuan. The Communists did not attempt to increase the number of mutual-aid teams

63. Ibid., Aug. 10, 1951, p. 3.
64. Ibid., Dec. 30, 1951, p. 2.

4: Burgess E-4, 5 (1926-1927) 1928 AF12 North China AF12

In the internal life of the village, common affairs, such as the lesser legal disputes and providing the village teacher for the children, are in the hands of the village elders, an informal group of the older family heads who act as advisers of the headman of the village. The chief occupation is agriculture, and the clothing is frequently made from cotton grown in the local area. The religious life of the villagers is to a large extent confined to the worship of the ancestors in the homes and to the worship at the village temple, which also has its annual festival.

Certain group activities are engaged in by the villagers under the direction of the elders. The most common of these is the organization and work of the "Ching Miao Hui" or "Society for the Protection of the Growing Crops." Each family is requested to supply a certain number of youths to watch in turn over the growing crops. Frequently, also, families are asked to supply able-bodied men for the local militia to protect the village from bandits. The representation of the Chinese village as a democracy has been greatly overdone. As a matter of fact, it is a little oligarchy, controlled by the heads of the more important families. Among these heads there is a large degree of cooperation and counsel, but the people as a whole have practically nothing to say about the affairs of the village. In dealing with officials, the village headman represents the entire village unit.

THE MARKET TOWN AREA

Each village is linked up with a local market-town area. To this town on certain fixed days each month the farmer may take his excess produce for sale and here he may buy farm implements, grain, cattle, cloth or other products which he needs. Frequently the local areas specialize in producing certain goods, gold work, agricultural implements, cloth, jewelry, or other products. For the most part, how-